ALERT

News from the UFMCC on AIDS Legislation, Education, Research and Treatment.

UFMCC FIELD REP FOR AIDS MINISTRY BEGINS WORK

The Rev. Steve Pieters, appointed by the Board of Elders as UFMCC Field Representative for AIDS Ministry, has begun to travel around the Fellowship, preaching and teaching about AIDS.

Following the National March on Washington, Rev. Pieters travelled to Denver, CO where he led a workshop "Surviving and Thriving With AIDS", and preached at the two morning services of MCC of the Rockies. The first weekend in November, he preached at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Willimantic, CT, as well as at MCC Hartford, for their 14th Anniversary service. He also conducted the "Surviving and Thriving" workshop at Hartford's Gay and Lesbian Community Center. The videotape of his interview by Tammy Faye Bakker is always in demand.

November 14, he led a discussion on "Ministering to the Person with AIDS" for the AIDS Ministry Team of MCC of the Pomona Valley. This month, he has also spoken to the 9th and 10th grades of Palos Verdes High School, and for students at the AIDS Awareness Week at California Lutheran College.

At the third annual Commitment to Life fundraiser for AIDS Project Los Angeles, Steve was introduced by Steve Martin and Martin Short, to present the Buddy of the Year Award to Whoopi Goldberg. In his speech, he acknowledged Whoopi as a friend to all PWA's, exemplified by pushing the wheelchair of one of her friends with AIDS at the front of the March on Washington.

Also this month, Vantage Point Productions profiled Rev. Pieters as a "prototype long-term survivor of AIDS" for a documentary designed for newly diagnosed persons with AIDS, to be premiered on the Hospital Satellite Network in 1988.

Upcoming engagements include St. Luke's MCC in Jacksonville, FL, December 4-6; MCC San Francisco, December 12-13; and MCC Modesto, December 13. In 1988, Pieters is booked to be in Dayton, OH, January 8-10; Houston, TX, January 15-17; Whittier, CA, January 24; and Olympia and Seattle, WA, February 20-March 6.

If you are interested in having Rev. Pieters for a weekend AIDS Vigil, Spiritual Renewal, or any other event related to AIDS Ministry, contact him through the UFMCC offices.

MCC BROOKLYN ANNOUNCES AIDS MINISTRY

Metropolitan Community Church of Brooklyn, pastored by Rev. Susan Eenigenburg, announces the following services available for People with AIDS living in Brooklyn:

1) Prayer/Care Team: trained lay and clergy who visit and care for PWA's, offering prayer if the PWA desires. Primarily hospital and home visitations; phone calls on a regular basis.
2) Pastoral Services: Pastoral counseling, healing prayer, memorial services, bereavement counseling for friends and family of PWA's, communion for homebound/ hospitalized PWA's. Offered in response to request by a PWA or person related to PWA.
3) Food Pantry: free groceries for PWA's.
4) Community Worship every Sunday, 5:00 PM: PWA's and friends welcome; prayers for healing and blessing offered at communion, which is celebrated every Sunday Social hour following.
5) Other programs and activities available through calling the church office.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE AND SPANISH SPEAKING PERSONS AVAILABLE. For more information, call (718) 596-0191.

If your church would like to share your AIDS Ministry program, please send a description to Rev. Steve Pieters, c/o ALERT; UFMCC; 5300 Santa Monica Blvd. #304, Los Angeles, CA 90029.

TMTX PROTOCOL EXPANDING

Preliminary results from Phase I and II trials of the drug Trimetrexate (TMTX) indicate that it is an effective and well-tolerated treatment for Pneumocystis Carinii Pneumonia in 49 patients studied at the National Institutes of Health and George Washington University. Researchers are ready to test the drug on 370 subjects at the 19 ATEU's (AIDS Treatment Evaluation Units) across the country.

TMTX is used in combination with two other drugs, leucovirin and sulfadiazine, in order to limit the drug's attack. Alone, TMTX can attack healthy cells, as well as the targeted enzyme. The additional drugs will eliminate this danger.

For more information, call Dr. Fred Sattler at (213) 226-5222.

AND THE BAND PLAYED ON
by Randy Shilts

A REVIEW
by Rev. Steve Pieters

This is the book that everyone in the AIDS movement is talking about. The media have highlighted Shilts' research about Gaetan Dugas, who has been dubbed "Patient Zero". However, this is only a small part of the intricately woven story of the development of AIDS, and the responses of everyone from the Gay community to the Federal Government.

Shilts is at his best when he makes a clear indictment of the Reagan Administration's deadly slow response to AIDS. Each report of the Administration's inaction is punctuated with a running total of diagnosed cases and death. Shilts' strongly suggests that Reagan will go down in history as the President who allowed the deadliest epidemic of modern times to gain a stranglehold on the nation before even saying the name of the disease.

Beyond the Executive Branch's foot-dragging, And The Band Played On described the world of medical politics and political medicine in such a way that it is difficult to understand how progress in research has been made at all. The descriptions of the bickering, the homophobia, and the denial of medical experts, as well as city and state government officials, leaves the reader chilled with anger.

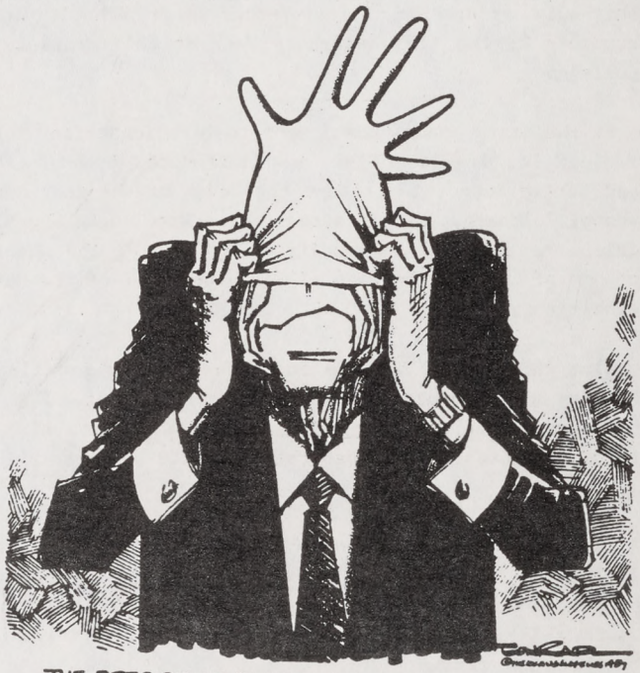
Perhaps the most difficult aspect of the book for the Gay reader is the endless stories of the Gay community's own destructive power plays and efforts to be politically correct. Shilts' demonstrates the way in which our disbelief about the severity of the epidemic caused the illness and death of thousands of Gay men, as the Gay male community of San Francisco (and by implication, other cities as well) fought to maintain the lifestyles and the liberties for which we had fought in the sixties and seventies. The debate over the closing of bath houses is the primary setting for Shilts' argument that even the Gay community contributed to the rapid escalation of AIDS cases.

Unfortunately, there are inaccuracies and flaws to the book. On page 490, Shilts states that the Los Angeles City/County AIDS Task Force was convened around the subject of bath house closures, reflecting the fact that Mayor Bradley and Supervisor Edelman were "beholden" to the gay community for political support. Dr. Neil Schram, the chair of the Task Force, told ALERT, "The Task Force was convened to address the complex and multiple issues of AIDS in Los Angeles County. Bathhouse closure was one of many issues the Task Force addressed in its three year history. Furthermore," Schram continues, "attacking Bradley and Edelman for being beholden to the gay community is entirely inappropriate. They were the only two politicians in Los Angeles willing to recognize the seriousness of the situation." Schram goes on to criticize Shilts for never checking the facts with him or any of the people involved. He points out that Shilts ignored (or never read) the actual Task Force statement on baths, urging bath owners to make appropriate changes, and use the baths as a place to educate about safer sex, or face losing the Task Force's support for keeping the baths open. This inaccurate reporting raises questions about Shilts' accuracy in the rest of the book.

The lack of checking details is also shown through simple flaws, such as misspelling the experimental drug "Suramin", which Shilts calls "Suranim". And even though he is quite fascinated with the slow development of drug trials, he barely gives a nod to suramin, the first antiviral drug to be used against AIDS. The disastrous side effects taught many people with AIDS the danger of jumping into experimental protocols. Many researchers saw this protocol as an historic first step in antiviral treatments. But Shilts leaves this story out.

Many people who have read the book have complained that the book has too narrow a focus, concentrating on New York and San Francisco. This leaves major holes in the story of AIDS in the United States, such as the passing of the first anti-discrimination law protecting people with AIDS in Los Angeles.

In spite of the doubts raised by these flaws, And The Band Played On is still a well-crafted page-turner. The way that Shilts weaves the stories of many people with AIDS into the political, medical, and economic reporting, engages the reader and provokes anger and grief. This is an important book. It will create a passionate commitment to fighting AIDS on every level for many readers. For many others, it will serve as a sad reminder of the tragedy we continue to face.



THE PRESIDENT FACES THE AIDS QUESTION

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ALARMING HETEROSEXUAL SPREAD OF AIDS IN BALTIMORE

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Of the men studied, 40.6% did not fall into generally accepted high risk categories, compared with the national figure of 15%. Among women, 48.7% fit no other high risk category, compared with 29% nationally.

Researchers noted that this is not a random survey, since it focussed on people already seeking screening for sexually transmitted diseases. Therefore, the overall infection rate for Baltimore is much lower than this study would indicate. However, it is assumed that other cities with large minority populations and/or significant IV drug abuse will also

Enclosed is my contribution to the UFMCC aids Ministry in the amount of

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Name _____

Address _____

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Optional: This contribution is given in the memory of:

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Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

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DUPLEX-RICHMOND, VA

quarantine or jail "promiscuous" HIV infected persons. The Health department also wants to be able to notify the sexual and needle-sharing partners of all HIV infected persons.

Rep. Tom Power (R-Traverse City), author of the bill, also included counseling for AIDS carriers, and some unspecified safeguards against discrimination for people with AIDS. However, he has been quoted as stating that he does not consider AIDS to be a civil liberties issue.

FORUM ON AIDS & CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY

The Second National Forum on AIDS and Chemical Dependency will take place February 18-20, 1988 at the Hyatt Regency, Phoenix, AZ. For more information, contact Conference Information, P.O. Box 81691, Atlanta, GA 30366 or call at (404) 458-3382.

UC SAN FRANCISCO GRANT FOR AIDS PREVENTION AMONG MINORITIES

The University of San Francisco has won a $7.1 million grant from the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Institute on Drug Abuse. The grant will pay for research and application of prevention strategies for high-rish people in minority communities.

Studies to be conducted include:

- -- The relationship between knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about AIDS and high-risk behaviors among 1500 black, latino, and white single women and men;
- -- Effectiveness of educational programs intended to reduce high-risk behavior among minority adolescents;
- -- The impact of counseling, social support, and antibody testing among IV drug users and their sexual partners;
- -- A program to promote AIDS prevention research in Africa and Latin America.

INTERFAITH FORMS

n November 3-4, representa-
ganizations formed an AIDS
he UFMCC was represented by
ng a legislative briefing by
Council, attendees visited
o discuss issues related to
legislative proposals. The
several national program
A Steering Committee has
commendations on membership
icture.

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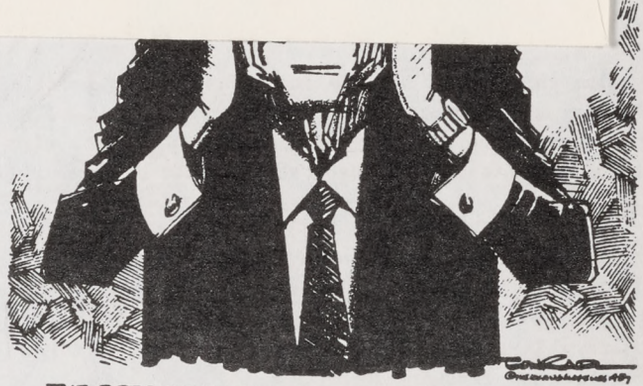
THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES



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Researchers noted that this is not a random survey, since it focussed on people already seeking screening for sexually transmitted diseases. Therefore, the overall infection rate for Baltimore is much lower than this study would indicate. However, it is assumed that other cities with large minority populations and/or significant IV drug abuse will also experience a rapid rise in heterosexual transmission in the near future.

Also in Baltimore, the University of Maryland School of Law has instituted a program where law students study AIDS related legal problems, and counsel persons with AIDS at the University of Maryland Hospital. Currently, four students are participating in the program, funded by the US Department of Education. It is hoped that the program can be expanded to include patients at John Hopkins Hospital.

MANDATORY REPORT: A POSSIBILITY IN MICHIGAN

Michigan may follow Colorado and Minnesota in legislating mandatory reporting of names and addresses of HIV infected persons to state health authorities. Gloria Smith, MD, Michigan's Public Health Director supports the legislation and also favors legislation which would permit judges to quarantine or jail "promiscuous" HIV infected persons. The Health department also wants to be able to notify the sexual and needle-sharing partners of all HIV infected persons.

Rep. Tom Power (R-Traverse City), author of the bill, also included counseling for AIDS carriers, and some unspecified safeguards against discrimination for people with AIDS. However, he has been quoted as stating that he does not consider AIDS to be a civil liberties issue.

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- -- A program to promote AIDS prevention research in Africa and Latin America.

AIDS NATIONAL INTERFAITH NETWORK FORMS

Meeting in Washington, D.C. on November 3-4, representatives of various religious organizations formed an AIDS National Interfaith Network. The UFMCC was represented by Rev. Elder Don Eastman. Following a legislative briefing by Ann McFarren of the AIDS Action Council, attendees visited various congressional offices to discuss issues related to AIDS and the status of present legislative proposals. The group also began formulating several national program initiatives for AIDS Ministry. A Steering Committee has been appointed to develop recommendations on membership criteria and organizational structure.

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BI-NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON AIDS

REFLECTIONS
by Rev. Ron Russell-Coons
Pastor, MCC Seattle, WA

Paradox is the best word to describe my experience at the Bi-National Consultation on AIDS, Toronto, Ontario, which was jointly sponsored by the World Council of Churches and the National Councils of Churches in Canada and the U.S.A., October 23-26. On the one hand, we were challenged to see the global, macro-level impact of the AIDS crisis (primarily through a presentation by Dr. Cecile De Sweemer, physician in Senegal and also through reports about AIDS among street-kids in Khartoum, Sudan). As the universal Church, we were prophetically called to search out ways to meet the needs of persons with AIDS in developing nations. (For example, we, in the USA, were urged to pressure Congress to live up to contractural commitments to the World Health Organization.) While this global opportunity is real and urgent, we found ourselves wrestling with the ageless questions of morality. Confronted by the vast needs, there were participants at the Consultation who remained entrenched in their view that AIDS is a disease of morality and happens to marginal groups. One question emerged throughout the weekend, "When are we, as the Church, going to quit seeing AIDS as 'us' and 'them'? When will we realize that it must be 'WE' in this crisis?"

There were three major divisions of discussion in the Consultation. Each division (Social Consequences, Illness and Health, and Sexuality) presented final statements and recommendations for the Church. The group which created the most controversy was the Sexuality division. This report urged Churches to educate people about safer sex practices even if that meant going against the moral teachings of their denominations. The Sexuality statement went on to say, "we confess that in the North American Churches, we have been too silent. Recent history painfully reminds us that silence can and has led to death. We have been slow to react and often contributed to the pain of persons with AIDS and those who love them by not recognizing them as our own. We have turned our backs on our neighbors from Senegal to the gay communities of North America."

Dr. Mervyn Silverman, San Francisco, related recent instances where surgeons at the S.F. General Hospital have refused to treat persons who were HIV+ or who refused to be tested for anti-bodies. In light of this sobbering revelation, the Illness and Health division stated, "We believe that all persons are equal before God. In view of their professional commitments and even in situations of perceived personal risk, we are affirming that the role of health care providers is to care for those who are sick, regardless of illness, gender, race, colour, lifestyle, sexual orientation, economic status or creed." This division also pointed out, "we are not called to be judgmental; we are called to be a healing Church."

My participation was in the Illness and Health stream. Though we began a process of dialogue, we also shied away from theological issues which were raised in the presenting papers for the Consultation. Dr. Abbyann Lynch, director of the Westminster Institute of Bioethics, London, Ontario, confronted us with questions about pain and suffering. What can the Church share with those who are suffering? How do persons of faith define illness and health? Dr. David Roy, bioethicist at the Clinical Research Inst. of Montreal, brought up the issue of patient automony. Roy feels that the Church must begin grappling with the ethics of euthanasia and patient suicide. "The key question of clinical ethics is: how can we help this person live or die in a way that honors his or her dignity, and ours as well?" I continue to believe that AIDS has spotlighted our own mortality in ways that we find very uncomfortable. The Church does not want to address this area of fear; the Consultation demonstrated, for me, that reluctance to talk about illness/health/death/dying.

During the weekend, I made connections with some incredible prophets of the modern Church. Besides those already mentioned, there was Sr. Una Conran, Calgary, Alb., who is so open and honest and willing to accept all persons as God's children. Her spirit of acceptance and the mutuality that we experienced could well be an example to the entire Church. It is my prayer that the Consultation was a beginning and that the participants returned home ready to reach out to persons with AIDS in the same way that Jesus lovingly touched all persons.

COMPUTER INFO ON AIDS

AIDS Knowledge Base, an electronic textbook, has been developed by UC-San Francisco AIDS Specialists, including Drs. Paul Volberding, Donald Abrams, Merle Sande, and Constance Wofsy. The on line data base, marketed by BRS Information Technologies, containing current information on AIDS treatment and care, is described in the AIDS Record as "a reference book for dealing with AIDS-related problems."

The data base is available by modem to subscribers, who pay a one time fee of $95, plus $50 per hour during the day, and $37 per hour during evenings and weekends.

If you are interested, contact BRS customer service at 1-800-468-0908.

Also available for computer use is WAIDS, a computer bulletin board dealing with issues related to AIDS in the workplace. For more information, contact Barbara Crofford at UCLA at (213) 479-3028.

House of Representatives - Appropriations Committee

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES—EDUCATION

2358 RAYBURN HOB (ZIP: 20515-6024)..... 225-3508

William H. Natcher, Ky., Chairman

Neal Smith, Iowa
David R. Obey, Wis.
Edward R. Roybal, Calif.
Louis Stokes, Ohio
Joseph D. Early, Mass.
Bernard J. Dwyer, N.J.
Steny H. Hoyer, Md.

Silvio O. Conte, Mass.
Carl D. Pursell, Mich.
John Edward Porter, Ill.
C. W. Bill Young, Fla.
Vin Weber, Minn.

AIDS Action Council

MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Director
From: Miguel Gomez, Director of Project Development
Date: November 18, 1987
Re: Update Amendment 963

The Council in the past few weeks has sent you two notices on Amendment 963, urging you to contact members of Congress to have Amendment 963 stricken from the 1988 Health and Human Service Appropriations Bill. Congressional action on the Amendment authored by Jesse Helms (R-NC) has been postponed until an undetermined date, possibly sometime in December. This postponement provides us with a tremendous opportunity to generate additional letters, phone calls and telegrams to members of Congress urging that the Amendment be stricken from the Appropriations Bill.

The Council believes that with the support of constituency pressure, we stand a chance of getting a positive Congressional resolution on this amendment. As you know, the Amendment could prohibit federal funding of any education efforts specifically targeted to the gay community that informs individuals of what puts them at risk. In addition, the Amendment provides that the heart of any federally funded AIDS education efforts must stress abstinence of sexual activity outside of marriage.

Amendment 963 is dangerous and could severely hamper public health measures to control the spread of HIV infection. We must do all that is possible to stop Amendment 963. Contact your members of Congress. If you have generated constituent pressure, follow-up your work and provide additional pressure. See instructions on the back on what to do. The fight has not been won. We need your help.

Senate - Appropriations Committee

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES

SD-131 (ZIP: 20510-6025)..... 224-7283

Lawton Chiles, FL, Chairman.

Robert C. Byrd, WV
William Proxmire, WI
Ernest F. Hollings, SC
Quentin N. Burdick, ND
Daniel K. Inouye, HI
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Mark O. Hatfield, OR
Ted Stevens, AK
Warren Rudman, NH
Arlen Specter, PA
James A. McClure, ID
Pete V. Domenici, NM

TWO WAYS FOR YOU, YOUR CLIENTS, YOUR BOARD AND YOUR VOLUNTEERS TO CONTACT YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

I. Call Members of Congress.

1. Call (202) 224-3121.
2. Ask the Capitol Operator to be transferred to the office of your Congressperson in the House of Representatives and your Senators.
3. Ask to speak to the individual staff person working on AIDS in the office.
4. Tell the staff person:

" I or your organization want the Member to contact his/her colleagues on the Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS) Conference Subcommittee to have the Helms Amendment stricken from the Labor, HHS Appropriations bill. And, I want the Congressperson to oppose the Helms amendment in any form." (If the staff person is not in leave the above message.)

II. Send a Telegram or Letter to Your Members

1. Address your letters to:

The Hon. Senator's Name
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Congressperson's Name
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

2. Sample letter:

Dear _____:

I or (Your Organization) urge you to contact the Conferees of the Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations Bill to have the Helms Amendment 963 stricken from the bill.

I or (Your Organization) want you to go on record supporting targeted education efforts to those most at risk for AIDS, as well as supporting education efforts that include, but are not limited to, providing information on abstinence unlike Amendment 963.

I or (Your Organization) request your support in working to have Amendment 963 stricken from the bill. Please contact me or (Your Organization) with your comments on this issue.

Sincerely

III. Write or Call me with information on what action you were able to take.

U.S. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

by Rev. Elder Don Eastman

The atmosphere in Washington can best be described as "turbulent", where more than 50 AIDS-related bills have been introduced in a congress besieged by the pressures and possibilities of an imminent economic crisis. Consequently, any update on the status of such legislation will undoubtedly be superceded because of a quick shift in the legislative wind. With that in mind, here's the state of things as of November 20, 1988.

Federal Funding of AIDS

Although the President has stated in a recent radio address that he would not support cuts in funding of AIDS research, the previous record and requests of his administration, along with prospects of budget costs under the Gramm-Rudman act, suggest the likelihood that once again AIDS is going to be seriously underfunded. During fiscal year 1987, the federal government allocated $534,000,000 for AIDS.

For 1988, the President's budget initially called for $530,000,000 to be allocated for AIDS. The congress however, in the FY 1988 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, has appropriated $971,000,000 for education, research, demonstration health care projects and FDA testing of AIDS treatments. But this amount is in jeopardy because of the current budget battle.

Constituent comments on the Appropriations Act should be directed immediately to Senators and/or members of the House of Representatives. It is even more important that correspondence be directed to the Senate and House Committee members that are considering this legislation. A list of these Committee members provided by the AIDS Action Council is included with this issue of ALERT.

The Helms Amendment

Three days after the great National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, Senator Jesse Helms authored an amendment (No. 963) to the FY 1988 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act. The Helms amendment provides that "none of the funds made available under this act to the Centers for Disease Control shall be used to provide AIDS education, information, or prevention materials and activities that promote or encourage, directly or indirectly homosexual activities."

The Helms amendment passed in both houses by overwhelming margins: 94 to 2 in the Senate and 368 to 47 in the House. Senator Alan Cranston (D-Calif.) asserts, "I supported the amendment, as I believe a majority of our colleagues did, because federal funding should not be used to advocate sexual activity of any kind, homosexual or heterosexual, or a particular lifestyle." But on November 5, Cranston joined eight other Senators who voted for the Helms amendment in calling for revisions of its language.

In a letter to the Senate Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies, the nine Senators expressed concern "about the impact that the amendment could have on ongoing and future AIDS education efforts." They proposed that the words "encourage" and "indirectly" be deleted from the amendment, and that a section be added to assure that provisions of the amendment "not be construed to prohibit the development or provision of AIDS education, information, or prevention materials and activities that are targeted to the homosexual communities..."

Miguel Gomez of the AIDS Action Council, however, has urged that the Helms amendment be totally removed from the Appropriations Act, and that its reappearance be opposed in any form.

Sometime during the next several weeks, members of the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Labor - Health and Human Services - Education, will be meeting in conference to discuss the Helms amendment. Any comments constituents wish to make should be sent immediately to Committee members.

The Federal AIDS Policy Act

Congressman Waxman (H.R. 3071) and Senator Kennedy (S. 1575) have introduced a bipartisan bill to provide for both counseling and testing programs in a confidential setting as well as anti-discrimination statutes to protect the individuals being tested. At a press conference prior to introduction of the bill in the House and Senate, it was endorsed by the American Medical Association (AMA), the American Nurses Association (ANA), and the American Hospital Association (AHA). Both the House and Senate have started hearings on the bill. The Reagan Administration has already registered opposition to some features of the bill.

The next step in deliberation is consideration by a subcommittee chaired by Waxman, the House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment. This is expected to happen sometime before the holiday season.

One of the greatest obstacles to passage of this comprehensive AIDS legislation is apathy. Apathy on the part of constituents becomes apathy on the part of congressional representatives. According to Bruce Millis, an aide to California Senator Pete Wilson, very few people in Congress see a high priority in AIDS legislation. Go to many congressional offices, said Millis, and you'll hear "They're just a bunch of queers. Let 'em die."

MISSIONARIES OF MERCY IN GLENDALE, CA

Divine Redeemer Metropolitan Community Church in Glendale, CA has established a religious order to assist AIDS patients. The Missionaries of Mercy, formed by the Pastor, the Rev. Stan Harris, has already begun its work. The Order was established in February 1987.

The active members of the order, which includes both sexes, wear no distinctive garb, except a tiny lapel cross, and do not live in community, but have their own private lives. However, they commit themselves to a discipline of morning and evening prayer, and to serve the community by visiting with AIDS Patients, and cleaning their homes free of charge. Donations are forbidden by their Constitution. Active members must be practicing Christians, but their duties are performed for non-Christians, and no attempt is made to convert or proselytize.

As the founder, Australian-born Stan Harris explains, "Jesus tells us that our lives and actions are 'sermon' enough; besides, most patients have enough to contend with, without being harassed by chauvinistic Church people."

Provision is also made to welcome volunteer helpers, who may wish to help, but have no religious vocation to the discipline of the Order. "atheists can swing a mop just as well as a Christian or other faith follower," Harris states. "The only requirement for a volunteer is a willingness to get a bit dirty; and if I can scrub someone else's bathroom, anyone can." Patients are asked to provide their own cleaning supplies, as the Order takes no money, and cannot supply them.

The Missionaries of Mercy travel in pairs, to facilitate speedy cleaning, and as the members work at regular occupations, most of the ministry is conducted in the afternoon or evening hours. A branch of the Order has been established at MCC Silverlake (formerly First MCC of West Hollywood). It is hoped that other MCC's may also do the same.

Divine Redeemer MCC's phone number is (818) 500-7124. MCC Silverlake can be reached at (213) 665-8818.

AMFAR TREATMENT DIRECTORY

The AmFAR Directory of Experimental Treatments for AIDS and ARC has published the 2nd of six supplements detailing 77 current treatments being used against HIV infection. AmFAR (The American Foundation for AIDS Research) works with the Professional Outreach Program of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease in developing and updating the directory. Drugs under study are described in terms of physiological action, toxicity, side affects, protocol specifics, and contact information. For more information, contact: AmFAR, 40 W. 57th St. Suite 406, New York, NY 10019 or call (212) 333-3118.

WRITE TO GARY BAUER

In an interview in the October 19, 1987 AIDS Record (Vol 1 No. 21), the Assistant to the President for Policy Development, Gary Bauer, urges people with "strong views on AIDS" to write to him, "even if they assume I would disagree with them."

In the interview, Bauer admits that "folks don't like what it is that the President says about AIDS," although he states that the President and he are in agreement on AIDS issues. He expresses skepticism about current medical projections of the numbers of AIDS cases; however, he feels policy makers should assume the worst.

In the face of clear indictments of the Administration's inaction on AIDS (see the review of And The Band Played On by Randy Shilts), Bauer credits the Administration with "unprecedented progress" in research and medical breakthroughs related to AIDS, and states that if similar progress has been made in cancer or heart disease, the Administration would be praised from all quarters.

Bauer continues to support the President's views on testing prisoners, immigrants, and those applying for marriage licenses, and does not understand why such opinions would be "booed".

When questioned about the vacancies on the Presidential Commission on AIDS, he states "My own hope is we ought to replace the two physicians who left with others that have medical backgrounds. I would also like to see someone on the Commission who is either a relative of a person with AIDS or who has had to deal with the issue in a personal way."

When asked about the possible breach of confidentiality or discrimination related to testing, he claims that if AIDS is to be considered a number one health priority, "you don't get hung up on whether someone might suffer some discrimination inadvertently." He further claims that he has never seen a convincing case for discrimination made from an AIDS related incident.

Further, he states, "I also suspect that some on the Hill and some in the gay community want to use the AIDS issue as a cover to promote a gay right agenda. I will be absolutely honest with you that I would oppose such an agenda with every ounce of strength in me. I can think of nothing worse in elevating to a legally protected status what I consider to be basically deviant behavior. If anything, we ought to be discouraging such behavior and not elevating it to the same status as race or religion as a matter to be protected against discrimination."

Letters may be sent to Mr. Gary Bauer, Assistant to the President for Policy Development, The White House, Washington DC 20500, or call (202) 456-1414.